

# Food Safety

## Overview

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has issued guidance for the implementation of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) -based food safety programs in schools participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP). Section 111 of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-265) amended section 9(h) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act thus requiring school food authorities (SFAs) to implement a food safety program for the preparation and service of school meals served to children, effective since 2005. The Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 strengthened the existing food safety requirement by applying it to “any facility, or part of a facility in which food is stored, prepared or served, such as on school buses, in hallways, school courtyards, kiosks, classrooms or other locations outside the cafeteria.” (Memo Code 37-2011. May 18, 2011)

## Terminology

Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) - A management system in which food safety is addressed through the analysis and control of biological, chemical, and physical hazards from raw material production, procurement and handling, to manufacturing, distribution and consumption of the finished product. Please see the HACCP-Based Standard Operating Procedures link in Additional Resources.

Standard operating procedure (SOP) – A set of written instructions that establish a procedure used to perform a job properly and facilitate consistency.

## What is a Food Safety?

For the purposes of the Idaho Child Nutrition Reference Guide, food safety refers to a written plan, based on HACCP guidance, implemented in individual schools to help ensure that meals served to children (who are regarded as an “at risk” population due to their immune systems not being fully developed) are safe. The food safety plan should be relevant to the school site(s) and personalized to meet the needs of the facility. A copy of the food safety plan must be located in each kitchen site and must be available to all food service staff.

### *Considerations in implementing a food safety program:*

Serving sites (cafeteria, multiple locations, and classrooms)  
Equipment available (for cooking, holding, cooling, salad bar)  
Operation “food flow” (receiving through serving)  
Menu item handling (No Cook, Same Day, Complex Foods)

### *Food safety includes*

- Standard Operating Procedures such as:
  - Cleaning and sanitizing food contact surfaces
  - Controlling Time and Temperature During Preparation
  - Cooking Potentially Hazardous Foods
  - Cooling Potentially Hazardous Foods
  - Date Marking Ready-to-Eat, Potentially Hazardous Food
  - Handling a Food Recall
  - Holding Hot and Cold Potentially Hazardous Foods
  - Personal Hygiene

- Preventing Contamination at Food Bars
- Preventing Cross-Contamination During Storage and Preparation
- Receiving Deliveries
- Reheating Potentially Hazardous Foods
- Serving Food
- Storing and Using Poisonous or Toxic Chemicals
- Transporting Food to Remote Sites (such as satellite kitchens)
- Using and Calibrating Thermometers
- Using Suitable Utensils When Handling Ready-to-Eat Foods
- Washing Fruits and Vegetables
- Hand Washing
- Record Keeping such as:
  - Cooking and Reheating Temperature Log
  - Cooling Temperature Log
  - Damaged or Discarded Product Log
  - Food Contact Surfaces Cleaning and Sanitizing Log
  - Production Log
  - Receiving Log
  - Refrigeration Log
  - Thermometer Calibration Log
  - Food Safety Training Agenda and Attendance
  - Temperature Logs for Food Storage (dry storage, coolers, freezers; temperatures taken and recorded daily on days when school is in operation and regularly during school breaks)
  - Dating all Food Items with Month, Day, Year (rotation of food items - "First In, First Out")
  - Food Labels (identification in the event of a food recall or for a food allergy concern)
  - Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) (describes how to handle a chemical or toxic substance accident, listing ingredients in the chemical or toxic substance, and provides emergency contact information)
  - Grease Trap Inspections
  - Rodent Inspection & Insect Control Records
  - Public Health Department Inspections (two must be requested every school year; a copy of the most recent inspection report must be posted in public view in the food service area)
  - Annual Inventory Form

*Other considerations for a successful food safety program:*

- Review the food safety plan annually and revise it accordingly.
- Train food service staff on HACCP procedures on an ongoing basis and cover all topics annually. Keep an agenda and sign-in sheet of the training(s) on file for three years plus the current year.
- During the summer break, safeguard the food supply by checking food-containing freezer temperatures every two days and recording dates and temperatures on a temperature log.
- Post a sign on freezers providing food service supervisor contact information in case utilities are disconnected.
- Place locks on food storage areas and limit access to help prevent tampering of food items and theft.

**Why is Food Safety Important?**

Safe food is a key aspect of a healthy school environment. A food safety plan helps ensure that safe meals are served to children.

**Resources**

Additional resources may be available for this topic. Please check the Idaho School Nutrition Reference Guide website for copies of manuals, user guides and helpful links to relevant subject matter.